

B.A.R.G. NEWS

Official Newsletter of the Ballarat Amateur Radio Group. Inc. #6953T

ABN 44 247 200 143

VOLUME 27 ISSUE 11 NOVEMBER 2004

PRESIDENT: David Tilson VK3UR SECRETARY: John Kennedy VK3AIG TREASURER: Bob Terrill VK3BNC
--

NEXT MEETING - **FRIDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2004**
At 8.00 pm

EDITOR'S COMMENT

The BARG Hamvention is over for another year. Once again it was very successful with near 400 visitors having a great day. As far as I can tell most traders had a good day and some bargains were had. Thanks go to all those members who maned doors, cooked food, and cleaned up afterwards. Special thanks to Ian VK3AXH for his organisation and ICOM and TTS for their donations of door prizes. It is our duty to Amateur Radio to promote our hobby and it is by supporting such our fellow amateurs in their endeavours that we will promote our hobby.

Now that the Hamvention is over it is onto the Eureka Special Event Station and the other Club activities and the festive season. It does not seem long ago that we were talking about Christmas and holidays and we will soon be thinking about next year's activities so check your family calendar to prepare your own calendar.

DATES

Club meetings the last Friday each month starting at 8.00 pm during Daylight Savings Time

COMMITTEE please note that meetings (3rd Wednesday in the month) will also start at 7.30.

Construction Nights. Construction nights are held on the second Monday each month at 7.30 .

WICEN Net : Tuesday nights at 9.00 pm on 3.60 MHz + QRM etc. (Some times below 3.60) and after the net closes, a short check in on 40M at an agreed freq.

Eureka Special Event 27 Nov to 5 Dec 2004

Friday 19 November 6.30 pm Hamvention Ladies "Thank You" night

Friday 26 November 8.00 General Meeting Guest Speaker Val D'angri Topic "Eureka"
(Preparation for VI.3BML)

November 27 to 5 December Eureka Special Event Station (Refer to roster)

NOTE December Meeting Friday 17 December BBQ instead of 24 Dec. !!!

From the President's Shack:

It has been another busy month for members of the Ballarat Amateur Radio Group. We have had a very successful Hamvention, a visit to the Ballarat Observatory, meetings with the WIA and Amateur Radio Victoria and we are about to embark on our Eureka 150 special event station, VI3BML.

Ian, **VK3IDL**, and I attended the WIA Clubs Conference, convened by Amateur Radio Victoria. Michael Owen, **VK3KI**, the National President of the WIA provided information about the new organisation and moderated a series of discussions about club membership, publicity, insurance and the proposed Foundation Level licence. 15 Victorian clubs were represented and the key issues common amongst many of the representatives related to club accommodation and insurance concerns.

Yours in amateur radio,

David Tilson, **VK3UR**
BARG President

CONSTRUCTION GROUP

November's Construction Night was another success where our members sorted through the components required to construct the 2 tone audio test generator project. The last Construction Night for the year will be held on Monday, 13th December, commencing at 7:30PM and Construction Group nights will recommence next February.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Examination Results:

A little birdy tells us that 3 of our members have been successful during the recent amateur radio examinations. We are still waiting for the new callsigns to be allocated, but I'm sure that the people concerned will receive a big cheer at the next General Meeting.

Hidden Talents: Seen at the Ballarat City Hall: Jeff. **VK3PAP** at the Carillon playing single notes, presumably tuning it. I hope that Jeff will soon be composing music to show his talents.

Bob. **VK3BNC** has been watching too much TV, especially that ad. Where the star rides the "wheely" bin down the street. Bob tried to ride the bin down the drive to do the painting but came to grief. Use the ladder or stay on the ground Bob!!!

Club Sign Secretary John **VK3AIG** has been busy with the paint brush and has upgraded the BARG sign on the Sunraysia Highway at the airport entrance. Please take notice as John asks questions on your arrival.

Eureka 150 Celebrations:

The current operating roster for VI3BML is available on the BARG web site, www.barg.org.au. Val D'angri has prepared a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet and a timeline of activities that surround Eureka and this has been sent to members and will also be available on the BARG web site. Ian, **VK3IDL**, has also prepared a set of rules for use of the VI3BML callsign. Please ensure that you are thoroughly familiar with these rules prior to use of the callsign.

The Committee would really like to see members operating around the clock from the clubrooms and using club equipment on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of December and we will be providing food and drink at the clubrooms during this period.

General Meetings:

We kept our October General Meeting to a minimum, which basically comprised reports and a discussion about the forthcoming Hamvention. Following a quick supper the majority of members headed over the Ballarat Observatory, for an evening on astronomy. As the weather was overcast the Ballarat Astronomical Society arranged for Craig West, from the Swinburne Institute of Technology, to give a fascinating presentation on radio astronomy. This also included information on the proposed Square Kilometre Array, due to be operational in 2019, and a project called Radio Jove, developed by radio amateurs, which allows people to do some basic radio astronomy in their backyard. Our members then had a look at 3 of the telescopes and following a cuppa and a bit of a break in the clouds we were able to look through one of the telescopes at the moon.



*Gordon, **VK3FGC**, checking out one of the telescopes at the Ballarat Observatory*

Our next General Meeting is to be held on Friday, the 26th of November, and Val D'angri has agreed to talk to our members about the events of Eureka. This will be another busy night, so we will be starting at 8:00PM sharp...

XMAS BBQ:

The last event for 2004 will be a Xmas BBQ being held at the clubrooms on Friday, 17th December, commencing at 7:30PM. Members and their families are invited to come along and join in the fun. BARG will provide meat and soft drinks and members need to bring any salads

2004 Hamvention:

Well, the 2004 Hamvention has been and gone and hopefully all involved survived another year. According to Treasurer Bob, VK3BNC, it was our most successful (financially) for a number of years and there have been a number of people providing positive feedback and praising the success of the event.

Special thanks must go to Ian, **VK3AXH**, and his cohort of volunteers who put in a sterling effort to make sure the day ran smoothly. Despite the lousy weather, spirits were high and it appears that everyone had a good time.

TTS Systems donated an HF SSB/CW receiver kit as a door prize and **Icom Australia** kindly donated a pair of UHF CB hand held radios as well, which were very well received by the lucky recipients.

Home Brew Competition:

Our Home Brew Competition was a success, despite a limited number of entries, but we were fortunate to have high quality entries in each category.

Jeff Arnold, a SWL, won the Novice category with a LDR switch for powering on/off 240VAC appliances.

John Watts, **VK3TJW**, won the Experienced category with a home brew power supply. John designed the power supply from scratch for the competition and provided excellent supporting documentation. Well done John!!!

Noel, **VK3FGN**, won the Expert category with a very well constructed home brew 40m SSB transmitter.

Congratulations to all of our winners.

The judges were impressed with the quality of the entries. They were meticulous in their judging, looking for alignment of components, lead length, quality of soldering and documentation.

For their safety, the judging panel will remain anonymous.

"Good engineering lasts forever"

The U.S. Standard railway gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 foot, 8.5 inches. That is an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and the U.S. railroads were built by English expatriates.

Why did the English build them that way?

Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did "they" use that gauge?

Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

So why did the wagons have that particular odd spacing?

Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in England, because the spacing of the wheel ruts.

So who built those old rutted roads?

The first long distance roads in Europe (and England) were built by Imperial Rome for their legions. The roads have been used ever since.

And the ruts in the roads?

The ruts in the roads, which everyone had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels, were first formed by Roman war chariots. Since the chariots were made for (or by) Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

The U.S. standard railroad gauge of 4 feet-8.5 inches derives from the original specification for an Imperial Roman war chariot. So the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's

ass came up with it, you may be exactly right, because the Imperial Roman war chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the back end of two war horses.

Thus we have the answer to the original question. Now for the twist to the story.

When we see a space shuttle sitting on it's launching pad, there are two booster rockets attached to the side of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters,, or SRB's. The SRB's are made by Thiokol at their factory in Utah.

The engineers who designed the SRB's might have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRB's had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory had to run through a tunnel in the mountains. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railway track, and the railroad track is about as wide as two horses' rumps.

So, a major design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's rump!

Don't you just love engineering?

Thanks to Rotary Down Under.

CLUB GENERAL MEETING -OCTOBER

Ballarat Amateur Radio Group Inc

Minutes of General Meeting October 29 2004

Meeting opened by President David vk3ur @1935 hrs

Apologies vk3mna

David welcomed visitor Norma.

Minutes of of September as circulated Moved vk3kqq/cmc. Carried.

Business arising from minutes. (1) Gordon vk3fgc received 10 DTMF keypads costing \$10.00, to be sold @ \$12.00 to recoup postage.

(2) Home brew competition entry details as published in newsletter.

(3) Gordon vk3fgc to work with City Council re roofing at Club Rooms.

(4) Ian vk3axh to do test signal from home and site vk3rwa after Hamfest.

Financial statement Tabled and accounts passed for payment Moved vk3kgl/nbvCarried

*Correspondence. In W.I.A. re calendar of events for coming year. QST mag
Out. Receipt and note to Reg vk3caz.*

Reports Committee. Nomination for membership Charlie Vella accepted.

Craig vk3cmc put forward ideas on managing Club Library.

David vk3ur had discussion with Air Cadets, well received and interested.

Gordon vk3fgc had discussion with Army Cadets and again well received.

Christmas BBQ to be held Club Rooms December 17 2004

David vk3ur reported that foundation licence sill in discussion stage.

David vk3ur reported that Ianvk3idl and himself attended ARV/WIA Clubs forum.

Highlights included Michael Owen vk3ki WIA National President in attendance.

And 15 Victorian Clubs represented.

From Michael Owen. Pleased with evolution of WIA. No noticeable loss of membership. Seeking feedback from Clubs Re (1) requirements for affiliation.

(2) % of club members need to be WIA. (3) % of club members need to be licensed.
(4) Agreed principles.

Promotional Material. EMDRC excellent posters. WIA to source and charge to clubs.
Videos and Multimedia.

Foundation Licence. Possibly next April Draft syllabus developed. Unsure how it is going to be assessed. Determining requirements for assessors. Distance and equity.

Insurance. Working with NSW and WIA liaising with providers.

Club Reports. Clubs presented overview of memberships and activities. Biggest issues seem to be keeping present Club Rooms and providing access for disabled people.

Amateur Radio Vic to provide a 5 minute segment on the end of Q News for Victorian members.

No discussion what role ARV is going to provide and the services to be maintained.

Kathy vk3hrz spoke of the Q news broadcast and the family membership costs.

Ian vk3cis spoke on the roles of QSL and Repeaters re WIA. Further discussion on both subjects.

Hamvention. Ian vk3axh reported on Sub Committee meeting. Going ok 37 tables booked. A good show of hands for Saturday and Sunday to fill positions.

Eureka 150. Ian vk3idl reported on Roster and publicity. OPDX& 425 DX Mail lists.

Gordon vk3fgc reported on radio interview and risk management inspection with City Council.

CQWW SSB. Ernie vk3det reported that Club would not be involved.

General Reports. Amenities. Doug vk3vba reported on problems with vermin.

Gordon vk3fgc to complete mowing roster.

Club Nets Clem vk3bvi reported good numbers on net

Exams. Charlie vk3dcs reported 3 candidates sat for recent exam.

Education. Craig vk3cmc Awaiting details Foundation Licence.

Library. Craig vk3cmc Another shelf required. Stewart vk3ash to assist

QSL Michael reported on large number of cards arriving.

Newsletter. Gordon vk3fgc looking for articles

Technical. Ian vk3axh reported ok.

WICEN. Gordon vk3fgc reported Trunk Radio training exercise went

well. City Council to provide \$3500 to establish emergency link
between City and Club Rooms.

Construction Group Successful night with board etching. Next meeting to be held November
8th

Dining Night. Successful night Queens Head Hotel 19 attended. Next night to be at Argentinean
Grill. Hamfest Ladies to be guests of the Club.

Steven vk3heg reported on JOTA and the appreciation of all using the IRLP into other Countries.

General Business. Gordon vk3fgc and Neil vk3kqq as supervisor to arrange and complete the
outside works.

Meeting closed at 2040 hrs.

Members travelled to Ballarat Observatory for night arranged by Ian vk3idl.

FOR SALE

BARG has for sale one B & D type roller door with fittings

It was obtained for use at the rooms but it is not practical to use as we wanted.
 The door is available at the Club rooms for \$80.00
 Feel free to inspect at our next meeting or make an appointment at mutual
 convenience.

	Construction Night	Committee Meeting	Dining Night	General Meeting	SPECIAL EVENTS
November				Fri 26 th 8:00 pm (Val D'angri, Eureka)	
December	Mon 13 th 7:30 pm	No Committee Meeting	Fri 17 th XMAS BBQ at BARG 7:30 pm	No General Meeting	27 th Nov - 5 th Dec VI3BML Eureka Special Event Station
January 2005	No Construction Night	Wed 19 th 8:00 pm	Fri 21 st 6:30 pm (Venue TBA)	Fri 28 th 8:00 pm	
February	Mon 14 th 7:30 pm	Wed 16 th 8:00 pm	Fri 18 th 6:30 pm (Venue TBA)	Fri 25 th 8:00 pm	Sat 26 th Feb Exams Contact Charlie, VK3DCS

CLUB INFORMATION

REPEATERS

VK3RBA	(Voice)	146.750	Mt Buninyong
VK3RWA	(Voice)	147.100	Mt Ben Nevis
VK3RPC	(Packet)	144.750	Mt Warrenheip
VK3RBU	(Voice)	438.475	

BEACON

VK3RMB	438.475	Mt Buninyong
--------	---------	--------------

IRLP Node 6310 using VK3RWAS

CLUB e-mail vk3bml@barg.org.au.

CLUB NET VK3BML 3.610+/- QRM Thursday Nights at 8 pm E.S.T (Summer & Winter)

WIA Broadcast and Club Call Back. Sunday's 11.30 via VK3RWA (IRLP Node 6310

NEWS ITEMS Send to Gordon VK3FGC (e-mail the club) mail to Box 1261 Mail Centre
BALLARAT 3354

Weekly BARG HF Net: Thursday's 8:00pm on 3.610MHz +/- QRM

Thought for the month

In any given meeting, when all is said and done, 90 per cent will be said – 10 per cent will be done.